Connecting with Local Communities

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Questions discussed

When considering tourism and visitation more regionally, what ideas can you share for BLM's responsibility for partnering with adjacent land management agencies/communities to provide visitor services and recreation? What role should tourism play in NLCS visitor services and planning?

What are the BLM's engagement responsibilities when it comes to working with local communities, elected officials, and business communities to develop opportunities that match the mission of the NLCS and provide opportunities to local communities?

What role should local communities play in managing visitation, use and services? What sort of balance do you envision?

How do we engage local communities?

What can BLM do to get more acceptance/local support of existing units?

What are the strategies by which we can maximize the perception that NLCS units benefit communities and civic leaders and maximize our chances for success?

Direction from the Secretarial Order

- Sec 4 (b): The NLCS components shall be managed as an integral part of the larger landscape in collaboration with the neighboring land owners and surrounding communities….

- Sec 4 (f): The NLCS shall recognize the importance of a diversity of viewpoints when considering management options… in coordination with the tribes, other Federal, state and local government agencies, interested local landowners, adjacent communities, and other public and private interests.

Vision

We will successfully and meaningfully engage communities of interest and place in landscape conservation goals and build a mutual understanding and ownership with communities.

Key Points

NLCS as an active member of the community

Creating a culture that reflects openness, inclusivity, and engagement in all activities

- Making connections: Include communities in the management of the NLCS

- Building trust: NLCS participates as an active member of the community

- Communicating: Create a culture of two-way communication, both internally and externally

- Develop sustainability: Develop capacity and work collaboratively to define economic opportunities associated with NLCS units

Key Point #1: Making Connections

Actions:

- Involve counties, states, communities, and tribes in our planning processes and get involved in their planning efforts
- Utilize community involvement in monitoring and science and implementation actions
- Establish an online desk guide to best management practices for engaging stakeholders
- Utilize local businesses and organizations as information centers at gateway communities
- Create Bureaucracy Without Boundaries (Functionnaires sans Frontières)

Key Point 2: Building Trust

Actions:

- Being inclusive and fostering engagement: Create consistency in working with diverse viewpoints… talk with those that agree with you and those that don't, actively seek out all views related to issues (even those that don't agree and may be harder to find)
- Build the capacity within and outside the workforce to make this happen (e.g. Provide information, training, coaching and mentoring, access to specific skill sets, funding, etc.)
- Find ways to build working relationships on an ongoing basis, not just in relation to a project or in response to a crisis
- Understand and honor the local way of life

Key Point 3: Communicating

Actions:

- Each unit shall collaboratively create a communication strategy for consistent messaging to:
  - create a culture of two-way communication with both internal and external audiences
  - Create a shared vision for the relationship with NLCS and local community
  - Be clear about expectations between the NLCS and the community
  - Identify all audiences and design specific ways for communicating clear, consistent messages at all levels

Key Point 4: Develop Sustainability

Actions:

- Develop capabilities and work collaboratively to define economic opportunities associated with NLCS units
- Work with commerce and tourism boards and related businesses
- Collaborate with communities by sharing information on recreation and visitor uses compatible with the resources
- Share our network resources ex. other agency programs, National Geographic, tourism, academic resources
- Act to preserve and promote the local story

National Landscape Conservation System

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